

# Alison Grimes vs. Mitch McConnell



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*This is an unbiased comparison of the political positions and policy proposals of incumbent Republican Senator **Mitch McConnell** and Democrat **Alison Lundergan Grimes**, candidates in Kentucky's U.S. Senate election in November 2014.*

Mitch McConnell has served in the U.S. Senate since 1985 and has been Senate Minority Leader since 2007. Opposing McConnell for Kentucky's Senate seat in 2014 is Democrat Alison Lundergan Grimes, who is Kentucky's current Secretary of State. The two often side with their parties and differ greatly in their approaches toward economic and social policies. However, they do share some similarities when it comes to their views on the environment and gun control.

## Comparison chart

### Alison Grimes

(45 ratings)



### Mitch McConnell

(44 ratings)



**Alison Grimes****Mitch McConnell**

**About** Alison Lundergan Grimes is an American attorney and Kentucky's current Secretary of State. In 2014, She is running against incumbent Republican Senator Mitch McConnell for his Senate seat.

Addison Mitchell "Mitch" McConnell, Jr. is the senior United States Senator from Kentucky. A member of the Republican Party, he has been the Minority Leader of the Senate since January 3, 2007.

**Political Party** Democrat.

Republican.

**Date of birth** November 23, 1978

February 20, 1942

**On Government Spending** Grimes believes in reducing spending through renewable energy and smarter healthcare spending. She agreed with the Democratic Party's 2011 economic platform that included rolling back Bush tax cuts and cutting the deficit in half over four years.

Supported Senator Paul Ryan's proposed budget in 2011, which called for repealing the Dodd-Frank Act, privatizing Medicare, repealing the Affordable Care Act, and preventing expiration of Bush tax cuts. Strong supporter of a 2.4% sequester cut.

**On Minimum Wage** Grimes believes the minimum wage should be increased to at least \$10.10 per hour.

McConnell is often vehemently opposed to increasing the minimum wage and has voted against increasing wages 16 times during his years in the Senate; however, under Bush, he did vote to increase wages.

**On Pay Equity** Grimes has not had the opportunity to vote on pay fairness issues but has voiced her concern that little is being done by the government regarding unequal pay. She has been endorsed by Lilly Ledbetter.

McConnell has voted against bills proposing equal pay, believing instead that other policies will result in greater equity. In particular, McConnell has said he believes various requirements of the ACA hurt working women.

**On Social Security** Grimes has stated she wants Social Security to remain functional and mostly the same for future generations.

Has voted to alter Social Security on numerous occasions, which opponents have suggested are efforts toward privatizing the program.

**On Stimulus Spending** Because Grimes has sided with the national Democratic Party platform of 2011, she would have agreed with President Obama's stimulus relief packages.

Though McConnell supported President Bush's Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, he has opposed all of President Obama's proposed stimulus relief packages.

**On Health Care** When it comes to the Affordable Care Act, Grimes has not always been clear on whether she supports or opposes the legislation. She has said that the Affordable Care Act as it exists today needs to be tweaked rather than repealed.

McConnell was a firm supporter of Senator Ryan's budget plan for 2011, which supported cutting Medicare spending and privatizing it. Wants the Affordable Care Act repealed.

**Alison Grimes****Mitch McConnell**

<b>On Environment</b>	Grimes is a supporter of the state's coal industry and opposes President Obama and the EPA's supposed "attack" on the business. Has run pro-coal-industry ads that distance her from President Obama's support of the EPA. Supports Keystone Pipeline.	McConnell supports his home state's coal industry but believes in finding different sources of energy. Supports coal to liquid energy, nuclear energy, and electric cars. Also supports increasing offshore oil drilling and the Keystone Pipeline.
<b>On Education and Child Care</b>	Supports increased public education funding. Advocates improving child care and wants to provide additional tax breaks to Kentucky businesses that create on-site child care centers or help their employees find affordable child care.	Though McConnell has occasionally voted for increasing public education funds, he has more often voted against such legislation.
<b>On Civil Rights</b>	Grimes supports more legislation to protect women who are survivors of domestic violence. On the issue of marriage equality, Grimes has avoided sharing her opinion.	Voted against affirmative action programs, funding for minority programs, and protections for LGBT; voted against marriage equality and reauthorization of Violence Against Women Act. ACLU, HRC, NAACP give poor ratings; Christian Coalition supports.
<b>On Gun Control</b>	Grimes has stated she is a member of the NRA and supports gun rights, but some conservatives have called her stance into question.	McConnell consistently votes against gun control measures.
<b>On Immigration</b>	Little is known about Grimes' position on immigration. However, in 2013, Grimes said she supported the bipartisan immigration reform that was being discussed at the time.	McConnell has stated that border security takes precedence over other immigration issues and has voted against immigration reform accordingly. Supports English as official national language of the U.S.
<b>On Abortion</b>	Grimes has stated she supports a woman's right to choose to have an abortion; however, she is against late-term abortion. NARAL Pro-Choice America endorses Grimes.	McConnell has repeatedly voted for legislation to restrict abortion and has been given a 100% score from the National Right to Life Committee for his anti-abortion stance.
<b>On Veterans</b>	Grimes supports passing legislation that will give Kentucky's 340,000 veterans their compensation faster and more efficiently. She also supports giving veterans health care benefits and helping veterans find jobs once they finish their service.	Supports of incentivizing jobs for veterans, cosponsored a bill called "Hire More Heroes" that would help hire more of veterans. Blocked a bill proposed by Senator Bernie Sanders that would have helped improve veterans' benefits.
<b>Religion</b>	Christianity — Roman Catholicism.	Christianity — Protestant Southern Baptist.
<b>Spouse(s)</b>	Andrew Grimes (2006–present).	Sherrill Redmon (1968–1993, divorced), Elaine Chao (1993–present).

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## Alison Grimes

## Mitch McConnell

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**Alma Mater** Rhodes College, American University.

University of Louisville, University of Kentucky.

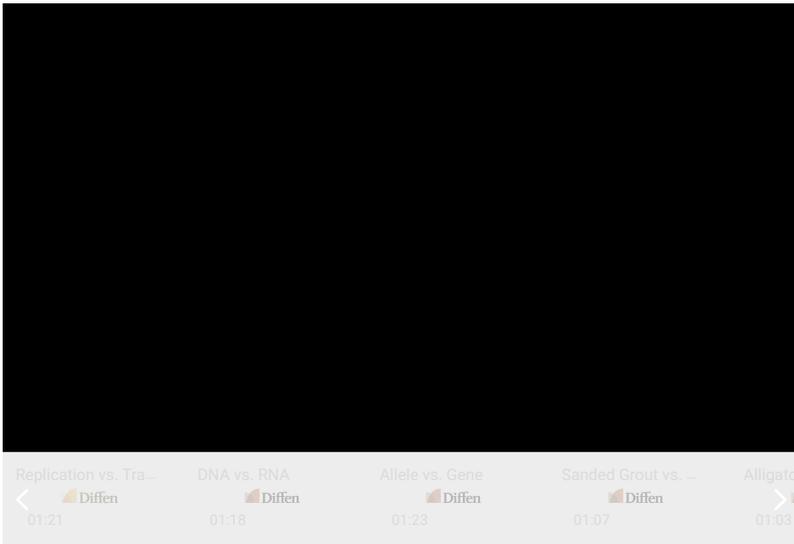
**Website** [www.alisonforkentucky.com](http://www.alisonforkentucky.com)

[www.mcconnell.senate.gov](http://www.mcconnell.senate.gov)

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## Economic Policy Differences

### Government Spending and Budgetary Concerns

McConnell is a regular supporter of Republican economic positions. For example, he supported Senator Paul Ryan's (R-WI) proposed budget in 2011, which called for actions such as repealing the Dodd-Frank Act, privatizing [Medicare](#), repealing the [Affordable Care Act](#) (a.k.a., "Obamacare"), increasing discretionary spending, and preventing expiration of the Bush tax cuts. McConnell has also been a strong supporter of a 2.4% sequester cut—a general, across-the-board cut to all government spending.

Like McConnell, Grimes believes the [government](#) needs to balance its budget as soon as possible and believes one of the best ways to do this is by cutting government spending. However, Grimes' intended methods toward a balanced budget are very different from McConnell's. She specifically believes government spending can be reduced through renewable energy programs and smarter healthcare spending. In 2011, she agreed with the Democratic Party's proposed economic platform that included rolling back the Bush tax cuts and cutting the deficit in half over the next four years.

### Minimum Wage

McConnell is often vehemently opposed to increasing the minimum wage and has voted against increasing wages 16 times during his years in the Senate; however, under Bush, he did vote to increase wages.

Grimes believes the minimum wage should be increased to at least \$10.10 per hour.

## **Pay Equity**

Four times McConnell has voted against bills that proposed equal pay for women, believing instead that other economic policies will result in greater equity. In particular, McConnell has said he believes various requirements of the Affordable Care Act hurt working women.

As Kentucky Secretary of State, Grimes has not had the opportunity to vote on pay fairness issues but has voiced her concern that little is being done by the government regarding unequal pay. She has been endorsed by Lilly Ledbetter.

## **Social Security**

In numerous cases, McConnell has voted to alter Social Security, which opponents have suggested are efforts toward privatizing the program. Grimes has stated she wants Social Security to remain functional and mostly the same for future generations.

## **Stimulus Spending and Bailouts**

Though McConnell supported President Bush's Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, he has opposed all of President Obama's proposed stimulus relief packages. This includes "no" votes on a \$192b anti-recession stimulus spending bill, an \$825b economic recovery package, and a \$60b stimulus package aimed at creating jobs, improving infrastructure, and creating more renewable energy.

Because Grimes has sided with the national Democratic Party platform of 2011, she would have agreed with President Obama's stimulus relief packages.

## **Healthcare Policy Differences**

McConnell was a firm supporter of Senator Ryan's budget plan for 2011, which supported cutting Medicare spending and privatizing it. McConnell is also one of the most vocal representatives to push for the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. Repealing the Affordable Care Act would potentially end the Kynect exchange in Kentucky. Kynect was enacted as part of the Affordable Care Act and allows easier access to Medicare in Kentucky. McConnell believes this program can stand alone without the Affordable Care Act but this idea has been met with criticism.

Grimes is a strong supporter of keeping Medicare and Social Security for future generations and would have voted against Ryan's proposed budget. When it comes to the Affordable Care Act, Grimes has not always been clear on whether she supports or opposes the legislation. She has refused on multiple occasions to say if she would have voted for the act. However, she has said that the Affordable Care Act as it exists today needs to be tweaked rather than repealed. She supports the Kynect exchange and wants to see it stay.

## **Energy and Environmental Policy Differences**

McConnell supports his home state's coal industry but also believes in finding different sources of energy. He supports coal to liquid energy, nuclear energy, and electric cars. He also supports increasing offshore oil drilling.

Grimes is also a supporter of the state's coal industry and opposes President Obama and the EPA's supposed "attack" on the business. She believes further supporting the coal industry will help grow the economy. Grimes would also like America to become more independent with its energy and not have to rely so much on oil from the Middle East.

Neither candidate is a strong environmental conservationist. McConnell voted against the Water Resources Development Act of 2013 and voted against adding more funds to the Car Allowance Rebate System (colloquially known as the "cash for clunkers")

program). Grimes has run pro-coal-industry ads that distance her from President Obama's support of the EPA.

Both candidates support the proposed Keystone Pipeline legislation.

## **Social Policy Differences**

### **Education and Child Care**

Though McConnell has occasionally voted for increasing public education funds, he has more often voted against such legislation. Grimes, on the other hand, staunchly supports increasing government funding to public education.

Grimes has advocated for improving child care and wants to provide additional tax breaks to Kentucky businesses that create on-site child care centers or help their employees find affordable child care. Grimes also wants to develop federal and state partnerships to make quality child care more accessible in rural areas. McConnell has typically voted against bills related to these issues.

### **Civil Rights**

Like many Republicans, McConnell is conservative on social issues and many civil rights issues. He has repeatedly voted against affirmative action programs, funding for women and minority programs, and protections for LGBT members. He has voted for multiple constitutional amendments to ban same-sex marriage. He also voted against reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act. His stance on privacy issues has been unclear or inconsistent; for example, in 2011, he voted for killing an amendment that would strengthen restrictions on wiretapping. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Human Rights Council (HRC), and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) all give McConnell poor ratings, while the Christian Coalition gives him 100%.

As a strong advocate for women, Grimes supports more legislation to protect women who are survivors of domestic violence. She has regularly stated that she believes this issue is one that has been ignored too long by the government; she has promised that she will fight for increased protections if she is elected. On the issue of marriage equality, Grimes has avoided sharing her opinion. Her stance on privacy issues is unknown.

### **Gun Control**

Both McConnell and Grimes are against gun control measures. Grimes has stated she is a member of the National Rifle Association (NRA) and once tweeted an image of herself at a gun range. Even so, some conservatives have called her stance into question after Michelle Obama suggested at a fundraiser that Grimes will support gun control legislation.

### **Immigration**

McConnell has stated that border security takes precedence over other immigration issues and has voted against immigration reform accordingly. He supported the Bush administration's efforts to build a fence along the U.S.-Mexico border and has supported English as an official national language.

Little is known about Grimes' position on immigration. However, in 2013, Grimes said she supported the bipartisan immigration reform that was being discussed at the time.

### **Abortion**

A major point of difference between McConnell and Grimes is on the issue of abortion. McConnell has repeatedly voted for legislation to restrict abortion and has been given a 100% score from the National Right to Life Committee for his anti-abortion stance. In contrast to McConnell, Grimes has stated she supports a woman's right to choose to have an abortion; however, she is against late-term abortion. NARAL Pro-Choice America endorses Grimes.

### **Veterans**

Grimes supports passing legislation that will give Kentucky's 340,000 veterans their compensation faster and more efficiently. She also supports giving veterans health care benefits and helping veterans find jobs once they finish their service.

McConnell is a supporter of incentivizing jobs for veterans and cosponsored a bill called "Hire More Heroes" that would help hire more of veterans. McConnell has also helped block a bill proposed by Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT) that would have helped increase and improve veterans' benefits once they return from duty.

## Debate

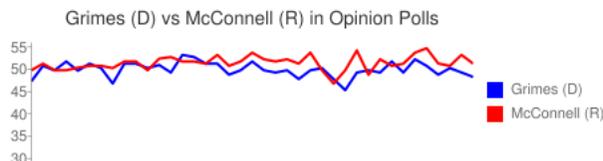
Here is the complete video of the October 13, 2014 debate between Grimes and McConnell:



## Recent News

- [A Onetime Rising Democratic Star Faces Questions About Voter Privacy - ProPublica](#)
- [Chuck Schumer Is Open Casting for Someone to Take Out McConnell - Vanity Fair](#)
- [Chuck Schumer has a plan to finally take down Mitch McConnell - AlterNet](#)

## Polling



Poll source	Date(s) administered	Grimes (D)	McConnell (R)
CBS News/NYT/YouGov	October 16-19, 2014	39%	<b>45%</b>
Voter Consumer Research	October 16-19, 2014	41%	<b>49%</b>
SurveyUSA/Bluegrass Poll	October 15-19, 2014	43%	<b>44%</b>

[See all poll results ↓](#)

## References

- Alison Grimes - *OnTheIssues*
- Alison Grimes' Political Summary - *Project Vote Smart*
- Mitch McConnell - *OnTheIssues*
- Mitch McConnell's Political Summary - *Project Vote Smart*
- Wikipedia: Alison Lundergan Grimes
- Wikipedia: Mitch McConnell

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